

THE
GREEN CALDRON

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Afternoon of a Bum

CALVIN WOLF

Rhetoric II, Theme 1, 1939-1940

At Twelve Noon

AT TWELVE noon, after Big Turk had turned over the sheets on every cot and swept the dirt into the corners, he slowly walked over to Old McGuire and poked him in the back with the end of the broom.

McGuire broke off convulsively in the middle of a snore and, mumbling protestingly, rolled over onto his stomach. After a moment he began to snore again.

Big Turk raised the broom-handle and brought it down with a stiff whack on McGuire's rump.

McGuire bolted up perpendicular to the cot, "Hey! Whadda hell! Whadda hell! Whaaa"

"Whadd'ya tink dis is, y'old bum a health resort?"

McGuire slowly swung his legs over the edge of the bed and sat there, lazily scratching his calves and blinking his bloodshot eyes. "Have you no respect for age, young man? Can't you let a tired old wanderer have a little sleep?"

"Ah, get d'hell outta here, you ole stinker. I gotta clean up. You got yer dime's worth." With that bit of repartee, Big Turk slowly walked away.

At Twelve-forty p.m.

Old McGuire stumbled down the dark, narrow, rickety stairs of Big Turk's flop-house and stepped out into the glaring midday sunshine that flooded South State Street.

He began to fumble in his pants' pockets and finally his hand came up with two pennies and a nickel. He looked speculatively at the three coins and then put

them back into his pocket. He turned and read the posters in the window of Harry's Lunchroom: "Coffee, three cents. Rolls, one cent. All Sandwiches, five cents. Pie, five cents. Complete Plate Lunch, sixteen cents. Soup, three cents. Stew, five cents. Special Today—Chop Suey, nine cents."

McGuire turned and started to walk toward downtown. When he reached Thompson's Restaurant, he stopped near the door and stood there for a moment, waiting. In a few minutes a well-dressed middle-aged business man walked out of the restaurant, smoking a freshly lit cigarette. Before walking into the office-building next door, he sucked deeply on the cigarette and then flicked it to the curb. McGuire immediately retrieved it, clamped it between his lips, and, drawing deeply on it, walked up Harrison Street toward the Salvation Army Mission House.

The sign in the Mission-House window said, "Come in and refresh your soul with Jesus—Free Soup Today." McGuire walked in.

A fat, greasy-looking man was standing behind a table and ladling soup out of a big metal pot. McGuire got into line. When he reached the table, the pot was almost empty. He saw a piece of meat at the bottom. "Kin I have a piece of meat in mine, pal?" he whined.

"Sure," said the fat man, and as he handed McGuire his soup, he dipped his thumb in it.

At Two-thirty p.m.

At two-thirty Old McGuire found a

bench in Grant Park near the lake-front. He sat down and looked out at the boats riding at anchor in the harbor. He looked at the long arm of Navy Pier, reaching out in the lake. He looked at the round-domed Planetarium, the three nuns in black and white sitting on the rocks, the blue-green waves slapping against the rocks, the gray-haired colored man fishing off the pier, the gray gulls wheeling overhead in wide lazy arcs, the Sand-Sweeper creeping across the lake and the long black trail of smoke leaning back from her funnels, the boats riding at anchor. And somehow looking at all these things made Old McGuire think of all the things he had seen and done. Of riding back and forth across the continent on the big freights. Of all the places—the far places, the strange places, the enchanted places . . . all the places that are America. Of the lights that he had seen and the women. Of the shut doors and the staring faces. Of back-door handouts, breadlines, mission-houses, jungle camps, small-town jail-houses. Of the Bowery, of New Orleans, of San Francisco—the orange groves, the pea fields, the canneries. Of waiting outside theatres, opera houses, night-clubs, and whining at the soft-looking ones, "I'm down and out now, Mister. Kin I have a quarter?" And of always keeping an eye peeled for the cop standing on the corner.

Old McGuire thought of all these things, and thinking of them made him tired, and being tired, he stopped thinking of them, and being empty of all thought, he dozed off on the park bench.

At Seven-thirty p.m.

While McGuire was sleeping, the three nuns left; the approaching night hovered for a while over the lake and then crept across the city; the automobiles arrow-

ing down the Outer Drive turned on their headlights, and the jeweled bracelet of the Chevrolet sign started to move; the business people and the shoppers swarmed out of the downtown buildings and the downtown streets into busses, L's, street cars, cabs, and automobiles, and rode south, west, and north to the residential districts of the city.

When McGuire woke up, it was seven-thirty. The first thing he noticed was that it was night; the second thing he noticed was a familiar sickening emptiness in his stomach.

He got up from the bench and walked back to South State Street. He walked past a Burlesque show (*Fifteen Gorgeous Beauties in Parisian Scandals*); past a used phonograph shop (*Twenty Thousand Records—Dirt Cheap*); past Maxie's Pawn Shop (*Cameras, Watches, Old Gold—Bought and Sold*); past liquor stores (*Bonded Whiskey and Domestic Wines—Prices Slashed*); he walked past the dime flop-houses and the places where the red lights were burning in the hallways until he came to a small tavern. The sign in the window said *Joe's Place—10 oz. Beer for a Nickel*.

McGuire walked in. He sat down in front of the pretzel bowl and ordered a beer. Every few minutes he took time out from eating pretzels to take a small sip of beer.

At Nine in the Evening

It was nine o'clock when Old McGuire sauntered out of Joe's Place, contentedly chewing a toothpick. He stood for a moment, delicately sniffing the night air. He put his hand in his pocket and felt the two pennies between his fingers; then he turned and started walking back to Grant Park. Passing through Downtown, he dropped two

pennies in a blind man's hat. The blind man turned and looked at him in surprise.

When Old McGuire reached Grant Park, he found an old newspaper. He laid the newspaper under his head and

stretched out in the grass. He looked up at the sky. The sky was velvet, set with diamonds. Every sixty seconds the white band of the Palmolive Beacon sheared across it.

After a while McGuire fell asleep.

Incident

HECTOR MANJARREZ

Rhetoric I, Theme 8, 1939-1940

FOR TEN consecutive hours I didn't say a word. For ten hours, all the way from Laredo, Texas, I had been sitting in one of those luxurious but terribly uncomfortable seats of a bus. The country didn't seem to be very friendly. I was scared, and although I was hungry, I didn't have the courage to step out of the bus to buy a bite in the small roadside restaurant where we had stopped. I was still too busy trying to put together all the thoughts that came to my mind, still full of memorable words muttered by beloved lips when we said goodbye. Then, all of a sudden, I realized I was alone. I began to realize that in leaving Mexico I had left, perhaps forever, all the things that had been dear to me. I felt like crying. I left the bus, went into the inn, and sat at one of the tables.

I was looking helplessly at the surroundings when a little woman came up and started talking to me. Since I didn't know what she was saying, I remained silent. I couldn't say anything because I didn't know her language. The moment was tense. Finally, finding strength in weakness, I said, "Me Engleesh speak no," and hurriedly proceeded to point to some of the items on the menu. I don't remember how many things I asked for; but she looked startled, and without saying one more word, disappeared into the

back room. Pretty soon she was putting three dishes of ice cream, one milk shake, one ice-cream soda, one Pepsi-Cola, one Coca-Cola, and a cup of coffee in front of my astonished eyes. Evidently this conglomeration had been my order, and I proceeded to eat it. What else could I do?

After the ordeal was over, I found that I still had seven minutes at my disposal. "In seven minutes I should be able to wash my face," I thought, and without hesitation I directed my steps toward the doors labeled "Ladies" and "Gentlemen." This time I was not going to be tricked; so I opened my dictionary and read: "Gentleman, *n.* A man *well* born; sometimes, anyone *above* the social condition of the yeoman." (The Spanish and English definitions are alike.) "That is not my place," I thought; "I am an ordinary individual." Furthermore, I vaguely remembered that boys were called *lads* in this strange land; therefore, *ladies* must be the diminutive form of *lad*.

A strident scream was more than enough to convince me that I was wrong; another shriek made me run back to the safety of the bus. Once there, I swore never to believe in dictionaries and never to order meals in a restaurant again.

Parachute Fever

RUTH E. DANN

Rhetoric I, Theme 15, 1939-1940

A FAMILIAR, hot sensation pricked the length of my legs, now shuffling and "heel-tapping" with nervousness. A flash of hot fire gripped the small of my back, and seared under my left shoulder. I picked up my hands, looked at them, looked at the rivulets of perspiration, and smiled. My nose stung. I couldn't bear the tinglings in my ears, and I pressed their tips and felt the warm blood course through them.

I had substituted the airline company's black wool sweater for my brown leather jacket, and a pale, poised stewardess strapped the chute tightly over it. The life-package was bulky, cumbersome, and the suspenders cut dirty-white lines in the sweater. I fingered it hesitantly, repeating the curt, controlled instructions given me. Count ten and pull the rip cord! Count ten and pull the rip cord! Count ten—would I know when it was ten? How would I know? How?

I stood impatiently, third from the safety door. Two thoroughly frightened women were ahead, clenching their knuckles. And yet watching them, I suddenly felt stronger, freer. And unafraid! Stepping out, out and away, was to be my experience! I felt *eager* for the doubled-up hurtling, and the pain of first breathing! Eager for the drunken liting through air, and the snapping of the wind-driven folds. I wanted to fall! To fall through cottony mists and sun-spattered air, to the green and brown floor below.

Hysterical, the two women were firmly urged out. The stewardess and co-pilot clocked the necessary sixty seconds and nodded. Now—fear! Sudden

and agonizing fear! I couldn't! I wouldn't!

There were three smiles, and I allowed my feet to slip! In the swift, stabbing rush of tearing wind, I tried to count. My bungling fingers reached the cord, touched it, freed it! I shot down without breathing; and, finally, slapping gusts of wind filled the belly of the chute and jerked me upwards. I held onto my straps with ferocity. Shoes were burdensome and stiffly heavy, and my skirt ballooned with wind. Far below, I could see my successful comrades, floating away like tiny chips of pure, white soap adrift in a blue, wide tub.

My fear of height deserted me, and I resented the slipping by of precious minutes. Now and then, a sudden, sharp onslaught of air would buffet me, and a sick feeling "queasied" through my stomach. And soon, a less violent, but more determined breeze would waft me far, far to the side, so that I traveled slowly across the sky, instead of down. I could feel the blood leaving my arms, and glancing up I saw them as white and rigid as the parachute. My ears were beginning the first warnings of a change in atmospheric pressure, and my eyelids became heavy.

The ribbons of road and pin-points of humanity far below grew larger. I followed the skim of a black, sleek car for several miles, until I lost it in a cloud. When I emerged from the patchy, misting vapors, I tried to find it again, but it had dipped into some valley, and I turned dim attention to a huge red truck creeping up a hill. The trees seemed richly foliated, and I planned my couch

with care. I had decided on the fat, green tree, straight below me, but the chute floated annoyingly away, and I kicked the empty air in vain. Farmers had discovered our descent and were shouting vociferously. It was soon to be over! I shut my eyes and memorized the far-away sounds below, and the small, anemic whistle of the wind.

I was very close to the ground! I became frightened again, and clutched the straps violently. I flexed my ankles, and bent my knees. The wind was wild!

It was to be a stubbled corn field. I waited.

I sat down, arose, and bumped down again. The clipped stalks scratched my legs and arms. The wind was raking me across the field. I twisted my straps and dug my numb toes into the hard ground. I could not stop the painful rolling. In the near distance there loomed a black oak. I licked my lips, went limp for protection, and with a slapping and kicking thud, rapped my tired body against the trunk.

Haircut

SHIRLEY SHAPIRO

Rhetoric I, Theme 2, 1940-1941

I WAS FIRST. *The barber parted my straight black hair in a long line down the center. . . .*

Mrs. Grey boarded us for the Child Welfare Agency with all the enthusiasm of a turtle and possibly a little less imagination. The four of us were standardized by unbecoming Dutch bobs which required a minimum of attention when the oatmeal needed stirring. We ate a lot of oatmeal. It has calories or something.

The barber tickled the scissors across my forehead and a shower of shorn bangs teased my nose as the haircut went on. . . .

Once a month I visited the hospital. Mother sat up in bed and pretended compliments about my "good" yellow dress with the celluloid buttons; she asked me about school and food and tooth-brushing; she told me funny stories about what the doctors did and said, and we had a nice laugh. Then came a performance consisting of a poem, a song, and a ballet dance in my best manner addressed to "the deaf man in

the back row." Occasionally a nun would come in to sit with my mother and the mixed audience we had invented for the day, and then the clapping was twice as loud after my curtsy; sometimes it was loud enough to warrant a curtain call from behind the Japanese folding screen with the broken hinge.

Daddy took me walking on Sundays; after a morning of reporting my week's activities I was always more than ready to be stuffed to the gills by one of grandma's dinners. Only once can I remember not enjoying dinner; as I tried to swallow each bit of roasted chicken it stubbornly refused to be swallowed. After that I didn't smoke any more of those skinny, brown "Indian cigars" that grew in Grey's front yard on an excitingly wicked tree.

I climbed out of the chair and Larry was lifted into it. The barber parted her yellow hair in a long line down the center. . . .

Even at the age of three, Larry had a vague idea that her mother was some-

thing not quite orthodox; because, although Mrs. Grey tried to persuade the woman not to be silly, she insisted that Larry know her as "Ruth."

Ruth came to see Larry every week and brought a strong, too-sweet odor of perfume into the house. Her cheeks were two smudges of pink under her deep eyes. When she talked, there was a white slit in the red streak that couldn't have really been all her mouth. Larry thought, even said, that Ruth was beautiful . . . but she called Mrs. Grey "mamma."

The barber bounced Larry out of the chair and beckoned to Twila. She sat looking at herself in the wavy mirror while he parted her bargain permanent in a long line down the center. . . .

When things got to be too much of an ordeal for Mrs. Grey, thirteen-year-old Twila came to the house to help out. Between duties, she told me the first smutty stories I had ever heard; every lurid detail grew more lurid on Twila's tongue. She had kissed a boy and she had been to a funeral; her descriptions of both experiences were embellished nightly as we lay in the iron beds at one end of the attic dormitory.

She had a picture of her mother in a coffin with a black dress, and some flowers that Twila told me were blue.

She had a picture of her boy friend, too; he wore a striped bathing suit and carried a big beach ball. On the back was written, "Hi, kid."

When Twila's hair was done, Mardell and Martha argued the merits of being "first" until Mrs. Grey decided the question. In turn, the barber parted their twin heads of brown hair in long twin lines down the center. . . .

The twins had several queer and annoying customs. At breakfast, their two-year-old minds prompted them to turn half-full oatmeal bowls upside down in their hair. At lunch, they bathed in jello. One day the two of them extracted three dozen eggs from the grocery order on the kitchen table to make a horrible yellow mess on the floor. Why in heaven's name they were Mrs. Grey's favorites I can never tell, but she tried time and again to persuade their widowed father to place them for adoption. He never did, but she never stopped trying.

Mardell and Martha accepted their lavender lollipops. The four of us were smothered in blue wool coats and herded out of the shop. As we left, a little girl struggled up onto the barber's chair. He combed her hair down over her face.

"Oh," he apologized to her mother, "I've forgotten again. Which side do we part this on?"

Problem Child—or Problem Parents?

Proud parents watch their offspring with great vigilance and are thrown into a panic if a child doesn't react the way the psychologist assures them it should react. The horror-stricken mother announces to the bewildered father that they have a problem child on their hands. And immediately the household is plunged into a spirited, relentless campaign to change the "problem child" into a normal one. All this proceeds to the amazement and amusement of the perplexing child. . . .

In the past the most competent authorities have directed their advice entirely at the parent. It's all been about how to deal with the problem child. That's all very well, if the parents take the advice, and if the child really constitutes the problem. But sometimes it's the other way around. I for one am firmly convinced that it would be invaluable for children to have some advice on how to handle their "problem parents."—REGINA EBERLE

Old O. B. Smith

VINCENT WEST

Rhetoric II, Theme 5, 1939-1940

THE MOST unreasonable fellow I ever worked for was old O. B. Smith. He had been driven from his pecan factory when irate parents and husbands discovered the slave-driving tactics he used on the young girls in his employ. Here on the farm, however, there were none to object. Here, his outrageous disregard for the health and safety of his employees flourished unabated. He regarded each of us as just one more inefficient piece of machinery; just another pawn over which he could flaunt his authority.

When the tinny jangle of the farm telephone called Avery from our breakfast of deeply browned hot cakes and crisp bacon, I knew that something was amiss. From where I sat I could hear Avery's replies.

"Yes, yes. I've been up for an hour." Actually, he didn't even have his shoes on.

"No, I haven't seen the steer."

"We might. You'll send another man, won't you?" I walked in to where the phone hung on the wall. Now I could hear O. B.'s harsh old voice crackle over the wire.

"I want that steer ready when the truck gets there. I can't get a man at this hour, so you fellows had better start looking for him. I don't like your back-talk, either." Bang! The receiver hit the hook at the far end of the line.

We had no alternative. The steer must be tied when the truck came in, or we would soon be looking for new jobs. The animal to which he referred was a great half-ton white-face, which had been our chief source of misery and

worry for the past five months. As a rangy four-hundred-pound calf, newly arrived at the farm, he had knocked down the three men who tried to get him off the truck. Then he had walked over them and come down the chute without further ado. Ever since, his mischief had increased in proportion to his increase in size. Whenever the steers were moved from one pasture to another, he was invariably in the unfenced woods. He leapt the fences as easily as his herd-mates leapt the shallow streams which flowed across the pasture. He was all bad. He seemed really to enjoy his deviltry. Now old O. B. expected us to pit our puny strength against him. It was impossible. Yet our jobs depended upon it, so we slipped into our jumpers and started out, not knowing what we would do, nor how we could hope to effect the capture.

Beside the barn was an old creep-feeder. Here we had fed the younger calves to protect them from such tyrants as the one we were after. It was here, surprisingly enough, that we found him. Since the feeder was no longer used, the gate had been left open. The steer, as though anxious to investigate the one pen into which he had never jumped, had entered the feeder and was busily licking the empty salt trough. It would be an easy capture, I thought. I could sneak along the corncrib and close the gate before he knew I was near. That pen would surely hold him. No steer could jump a four-foot fence from a standing start. I was sure of it.

I was so sure of it that as the heavy gate swung shut I laughed aloud. It was

the first indication the white-face had of my presence. He turned to stare, and then, just as the gate clicked, he took a single step forward, grunted his defiance, and rising like a horse at the first hurdle, he cleared the gate in a seemingly effortless leap which carried him to the ground before me. He lowed. It was a triumphant blast. Then, walking a few feet away, he began to nibble the lush blue-grass as unconcernedly as a dairy cow just loosed after a long night in the barn.

I had been so engrossed with this exhibition of massive agility that I had completely forgotten Avery. I had not even noticed that he had returned to the house as I crept along behind the corn-crib. Even if I had noticed this I would have had no way of divining his intentions. Now I could see him approaching, shielded from the steer's range of vision by a haystack. He carried an old clothes line rope coiled to form a lariat. It seemed impossible that he could expect that slender strand to hold the brute, but there he came, shaking out a large loop. He had often boasted of his prowess with a rope; perhaps he knew what he was about.

The steer seemed to sense his danger. He raised his head and stood nervously taut, his eyes on the haystack. As Avery shook out the loop for the last time and stepped around the stack, the steer fled for the fence. Just as he launched himself into another of those magnificent leaps, the loop settled about his horns. He seemed to collapse in mid-air. His head bent under him, his feet went high in the air, and head foremost he crashed into the ground. There was a crunching sound, as of breaking bones. The steer lay on his side, stunned, with blood spurting from his poll. A little apart from him stood one of his horns, impaled in the hard earth of the driveway.

Across the drive Avery lay sprawled in the grass, the rope slack in his hands, for the breaking of one horn had allowed the rope to slip from them both. Only the force of the fall prevented the steer from escaping into the unfenced woodland behind the pasture, where he could have eluded capture as long as he liked. I realized, however, that the battle had scarcely begun, for the steer even now was making feeble efforts to get up. Knowing that a crippled steer is vicious, and realizing at the same time that our only chance lay in keeping him down, I leapt upon his head.

Scarcely had I secured a hold upon him when he began to struggle. All his range-bred viciousness seemed to come to his command. In a futile effort to shake me off he struck with his horn, swung his head back and forth, and rolled from side to side. I realized the danger of his hoofs, but I soon found that I could no longer keep behind him. His hoofs struck nearer and nearer until they were digging great chunks out of the hard-packed earth of the driveway right beside my leg. Though my breath was coming in hot, dry gasps, which seemed to burn as they passed through my throat, and though my lungs seemed about to burst and my muscles ached from the sheer effort of holding on, I summoned my ebbing strength in order to roll over his massive head to the comparative safety behind his back. In this position the blood from his wound spurting into my face and eyes. I couldn't wipe it away.

I don't know whether I grew weaker or the steer grew stronger, but at any rate he shook me off and began once more to strike at me with his hoofs. These soon began to rip through the loose legs of my trousers. Very soon they were digging painfully into my legs. Such pains shot through my body that it seemed I must relinquish my hold; that

I could not pit my exhaustion against the agility of his brutish determination. Just when I had decided to let go, the steer's club-like hoofs ceased their tattoo upon my legs, and his struggles became less; soon he lay quite subdued, his great sides heaving from the struggle. Looking back, I found that Avery had finally secured the steer's feet in the coils of the rope. We had won. In just a moment Avery had fashioned a pinch-halter of the loose end of the rope, and slipped it over the steer's bloody head.

It was only then that I relaxed. Loosening my grip, I rolled a few feet away, and lay flat on my back, breathing deeply. I was near collapse, and would have lain there for some time if I had not heard O. B.'s truck in the lane. At this I got up and stood leaning against

a tree while he got out. After inspecting the steer, he berated Avery, as we knew he would, for allowing the steer to be injured. As I stood there, the fields before me swayed and shimmered behind a pink and lavender mist. I rubbed my eyes. My hand came away stained with blood. The sickish sweet odor of it so nauseated me that I turned away, and would have gone to the creek to wash, had O. B. not turned upon me at this moment.

"Well, what are *you* waiting for?" he demanded. "Avery and I can handle this steer." He pulled his watch from his pocket and continued, "You're five minutes late already. Now, get those mules hitched out in a hurry."

That was the thanks I got for a ten-minute wrestling bout with the wildest steer in Arkansas.

So-long Roommate

FREDERICK JAUCH

Rhetoric II, Theme 2, 1939-1940

WHEN I returned he was there, standing beside the bed.

"Hello, Jub. Just get back?"

He said nothing. His eyes were sober. His feet moved, and then he smiled.

"I'm leaving, Fritz," he said.

There were two packed grips with Illinois posters upon the bed. The two bottom drawers of the bureau were open and empty. There was only dust upon the top shelf of the bookstand. Save for several pairs of trousers that belonged to me, the closet was bare.

It was incredible. He was joking.

"How many hours of 'D'?" I asked.

He grinned sheepishly. "Twelve," he said.

There was an unbearably long silence. He leaned against the foot of the bed, his fingers drumming upon the post. I stood for a moment in the center of the room. I could feel drops of sweat on my forehead. I moved to the window and flung it open. The cold, fresh air felt good.

It was twilight outside, and I could see yellow campus lights in the distance. The chimes were ringing.

I heard him mumble, "It's five o'clock."

I lit a cigarette. "Going to get married?"

He shrugged his shoulders. "Maybe." He was smiling again.

"Going to stay home and farm?"

His eyes lighted up. "Yes. Until I get one of my own."

He turned toward the window, and his eyes looked far off. He looked at yellow rows of corn, green pastures of clover, black, freshly-plowed earth. He belonged with the earth.

"I've got to go."

"I'll help you."

"She's waiting for me in the car. Didn't you see her?"

"Hunh-uh."

I grabbed one bag. He took the other. We started down the winding stair.

"Coming out?"

"I'll say goodbye in here."

"You wanta see her?"

"I've seen her. She's beautiful."

"Yeah," he said.

He grabbed the grip I held. He clutched my shoulder. He was laughing now, but his eyes were wet. "I knew I wouldn't cry," he said.

"She'll make a better roommate than me," I said.

He laughed. The door closed.

I climbed the stair to my room. The window was open. The air felt good.

I dropped upon the bed and reached for a pillow. There were two there. I needed only one.

I heard a motor. I heard the gears shift.

The bottom drawers of the bureau gaped open. The bookstand was half-empty. The closet shelf was dusty and bare.

The Major

CHARLES WATERMAN

Rhetoric II, Theme 3, 1939-1940

THE ROOM was nearly empty when I went in for the first class of the new semester: only a handful of men was there and the Major had not yet come. I didn't know any of the men, so I sat down in the most convenient seat and waited for things to happen.

Rapidly the room began to fill. Men seated near one another exchanged information freely on the merits of the instructor for this course, some declaring that he was a "pretty low grader," and others countering that he was "a lot of fun." Engrossed in the conversation, most of us failed to realize the Major was coming into the room until somebody cried "ATTENTION!" We all snapped to our best "attention," and it was not until he got to the front of the

room that he came into our line of vision.

"Be seated, gentlemen," he said. He sounded friendly.

He was bigger than you would at first realize. His broad shoulders made the chair behind the table seem pretty inadequate, and his weight on the raised platform caused the boards to squeak when he took a step.

For a while nothing was said. The Major was sorting his books and papers and was giving them all of this attention. Suddenly he yawned—not politely or cautiously, but slowly and deliberately and as widely as possible. Then he looked up and blinked his eyes as if to say, "Well! Are you here?"

What he actually said was, "Now,

gentlemen, I think you ought to understand the way I conduct a class. I always make it a rule never to do anything in the classroom that a student can do. Moskowitz, front and center!" We all laughed. "Take these cards and seat these—ahem—gentlemen in reverse alphabetical order about the tables, starting here. I'll give you two minutes." Here he took out his watch and laid it on the table. When the student tried to ask a question the Major would interrupt him with, "Do you know the alphabet? Good! Use it!"

Finally Moskowitz realized that he had to do it by himself, and after a couple of false starts he got us seated in the order named, with places reserved for absentees.

"Barley, front and center!"

"Berley, sir."

"All right. Barley, you are the section marker. You take the roll and write the names of those absent on the blackboard—perhaps I should add, with chalk. Whoever comes in late erases his name off the board; otherwise he is absent. Is that understood?"

"Yes, sir."

"It is your further duty to call the class to attention when I come into the room. You will salute me, present me with the roll card, and say, 'Sir, section 800. Four men absent, sir.' Then at the end of the period you will rise and say, 'Sir, it is ten minutes of the hour, sir!' Then it's my job to take my books and get the hell out of here, see?"

All this was done with strict military rigor, but with a veneer of humor that took the sting out of it.

"Now you gentlemen will learn how to recite. You will stand, come to attention," (he emphasized his words as if he were addressing a company of 300 men or more) "and preface and conclude

your remarks with a little three-letter word—namely, *sir*. And now that you may show me that you know how to recite, as I call off your names you will rise, come to attention, say, 'Sir, my name is..... I know how to recite, sir.' Hereafter I won't say anything unless you fall flat on your face or something, but I keep a stink list and everytime you recite improperly I take a pencil and" (here he showed us the blank page) "write your name right here. At the end of the semester if I find you are between a D and an E and your name's on the stink list you get an E. But if you're between an A and a B with a clean slate, I have to give you an A whether I want to or not. Now recite."

We recited. There was a minimum of mistakes.

"We'll have a little lesson now. Brown, you name the divisions of the United States Army and give the purpose of each."

"The—the engineers. They uhh, they build bridges . . . and—"

"That's enough. Go on."

"The Signal Corps, sir. They handle messages, sir."

"The Medical Corps, sir. They take care of the wounded—uh—sir."

"The casualties. Go on." (Pause)
"The most important br—"

"Oh, the infantry."

"What do they do?"

"They, uhh, they handle the marching, sir."

A roar of laughter followed this sally.

"Sir, it is ten minutes of the hour, sir." This from the section marker.

The Major hastily grabbed up his papers, books, and pencils, tucked them under his arm, and ran off like a school boy late for class.

"Class dismissed," the section marker said.

Those Americans

MILTON HOEFLE

Rhetoric II, Theme 5, 1939-1940

HIDDEN in the rolling green hills of the Rhine Valley, the little German town of Adenau looked like a segment of the Middle Ages that had been transplanted into a modern setting. Ancient buildings of medieval architecture crowded the narrow, cobblestone streets, and at the top of a distant green hill, one saw the remains of an old castle covered with lichens. The citizens of Adenau held grimly to the atmosphere of antiquity that pervaded their town, and every holiday they would appear in their traditional garb and celebrate in the same old manner. Life moved smoothly here; each action was done by habit; all tasks were done in the same old way established by some long-dead ancestor. It seemed strange that such a town could exist, that time could pass and the town yet remain unchanged. Perhaps this was caused by the town's seclusion and its independence of the rest of the world, but whatever the cause, the result was Adenau, a town where nothing really important had happened since the end of the World War.

Occasionally some inquisitive visitor wanders into the town and disturbs the quiet of its daily life. Curious eyes follow his movements, and when they meet, the citizens greet him shyly and hurry on their way. But sometimes the stranger stops them and inquires about lodgings, and then they direct him to the old "Wirtschaft von Königsberg," an inn that was named after the castle on the hill. The inn is a narrow, three-storied building that seems even older than its neighbors that are crowded against it. Downstairs are a barber shop, a bar, and

a kitchen, while the upper stories are used as the "quarters," and as the home of two elderly ladies who own and operate the inn. As the stranger enters the inn, he is met by a wizened old lady who smiles, revealing her toothless gums, and asks her guest what he wishes. If it is a room, she goes behind the bar and gets an ancient ledger and assigns a room to the stranger. Then she always engages the stranger in conversation by commenting upon the weather or questioning him about his journey. But no matter what the conversation may be, she always asks the guest if he has ever known any Americans. And if he appears willing to remain and talk, the old lady draws him a stein of beer, and then leans forward and rests her elbows upon the bar. "Those Americans," she sighs and then smiles in memory. "Ja, those Americans are funny people." And with this beginning she relates an old story.

The sun was just showing itself when Frau Engelmann opened the shutters of her small inn. Curiously she looked up and down the main street of Adenau, which was hung with gay bunting and the colors of Imperial Germany. Usually the street was deserted at this early hour, but today it was different. Already people dressed in their best clothes lined the streets so that they might cheer the last few remnants of the evacuating German army. For a week now it had been like this; for almost a week the Germans had been withdrawing from the Zone of Allied Occupation. At first there were only convoys of supply trucks; then came the cannons, and now the front line troops.

Far down the street Frau Engélmann could hear the sound of marching men, and although she couldn't see them because of a bend in the road, she could picture the straight ranks of grey stained by the mud of the trenches and the road. Her heart throbbed to the rhythm of the marching feet, but tears formed in her eyes as she thought of her husband and her son who would never march again. Herr Engélmann had been killed in the early part of the war, and her son had been among the few chosen to hold the famous Hindenburg Line, where he too was killed. But she mustn't think of those things; it was a sacrifice that must be paid. She dried her eyes with the edge of her apron and smiled at the oncoming troops. "They are so thin and pale, and once they were so strong," she thought, and she wondered at the youthfulness of their features. And once more tears lined her eyes, but they were tears of thankfulness and joy for the peace that had finally come.

Slowly she turned away from the window and began wiping and polishing the top of the bar. The sound of marching feet and cheering died away. Suddenly she stopped in her work and stared fixedly into the mirror behind the bar as if she hoped to find the answer to some question there. In the back of the building she could hear her daughter cleaning up the barber shop. Silently she walked around to the back of the bar and wiped away a speck of dust she imagined was upon a stein. Hers was the only inn in Adenau, and although there weren't many customers, the business fed them. But now what would happen to them and the inn? After their troops were gone, then the Americans would come, and everyone knew the Americans were uncivilized. Often she had heard the old men of Adenau talk about the

Americans over their evening stein of beer. She heard how blood-thirsty the Americans were; how they would allow the Germans to approach close to their positions and then suddenly appear and open fire. And, too, she had heard how the Americans still fought Indians in their country.

The group of officers who had rested at the inn the night before said that there was to be twenty-four hours' difference between the two armies to avoid any trouble. If that were so, it would mean that the Americans would arrive sometime the next morning. Somehow she couldn't help wondering what the Americans would look like, how they would talk and act, but primarily, she wondered how they would treat herself and her neighbors. Hopefully she reached for her rosary and prayed.

By noon the last of the German Army had passed through the town. Now there was nothing more to do other than wait for the coming of the Americans. Frau Engélmann stepped outside her inn to take down the decorations of bunting, and as she worked, she talked to her neighbors who were also removing the many decorations. Suddenly they were stopped in their work by the noise of an approaching automobile bouncing upon the cobblestones and charging up the main street. The last of the Germans had passed through more than an hour before. It must be those Americans, but they weren't supposed to arrive until the next morning. Quickly Frau Engélmann slipped inside her inn and bolted the door behind her. Then she cautiously went to a window in order to see what was happening. A mud-splattered ambulance had stopped across the street; she could tell it was an ambulance because the Red Cross insignia was painted on its side, but she also recognized that it

was no German ambulance. Two men, one tall and the other small and stocky, climbed out of the ambulance, stood a second gazing down the empty street, and then strode rapidly towards the inn. "They're coming here," she whispered incredulously, and suddenly she was afraid. Fear caused her heart to pound like some giant drum, and the little veins in her temple knotted themselves with each frenzied beat. She remained motionless as though she were frozen; only her eyes followed the two figures in their olive-drab uniforms.

She watched the latch move, and she held her breath as the weight of a man pushed against the bolt. The door held firm, and the American rattled it, impatiently shouting to attract attention. "My goodness," she thought, "are they going to break down the door?" She was certain that every shout of the two men

was a terrible threat directed at her home, or perhaps her life. Some instinct told her to run, to get away from here, but she couldn't leave her inn because that was all she owned. Perhaps she had better open the door. Surely they wouldn't hurt an old lady. "Be calm," she called. "I am coming."

Frau Engelmann fingered the cross at her throat as if she found courage there, and then she opened the door a few inches and peered out. The tall one smiled. "Could we have some beer, Mother?" he asked in broken German.

Frau Engelmann stood and stared. He had called her "mother," she thought, and too, he resembled the son who had been lost on the Hindenburg Line. Suddenly she smiled, and stepping back, she swung open the door as an invitation. "Ja, ja, zwei Glässer Bier."

Hash-house Opera

Tony stood behind the counter, mechanically washing soiled dishes and slopping out bowls of chili and mugs of coffee, and all the men who have ever lived with burning ambition stood beside him. Tony is not going to be a hash-slinger all of his life, because he can sing. He had brought some operatic records for me to hear, and between customers he would rush back to put a new one on the victrola-radio he had rigged up. His chest would swell up and he would break into a powerful melody. The stained apron around his waist would miraculously vanish and he would be garbed in the clown costume of Pagliacci. But when the music had finished he'd be Tony again, and the callouses on his hands where he had husked corn for his father would stand out, although his eyes would go right on flashing with the mystery of his emotions.—MARY ANN STOKER

Tavern

At the table in front of us was an interesting couple. He was a fat man—the jovial type with a round, red face. His head was practically bald, but the deep dimples in his full face, which would attract you first as they did me, took years away from his dignity. She was the solemn, sober, hard-working stenographer type. She seemed to be bored with everything, as if she had seen it all many times before and no longer thought any of it interesting.

Well, he was a little drunk, and as a result he wanted to sing. He did—and loud! He had a tenor voice that was mellow and clear, but I'm afraid the way he was using it right then wasn't doing it justice. When he opened his mouth, the skin on his face, which had been so perfectly fitted for his somber moments, seemed ready to crack. When he closed his mouth and took a deep breath, his puffed, red cheeks shone like Jonathan apples.

She was terribly embarrassed. I could tell by the expression on her face and the pitch of her voice that she was giving him the devil.—J. F. DENNING

Pressure Plus

HAROLD GRANT

Rhetoric II, Theme 5, 1939-1940

IN SPITE of the warm sunshine that shone unobstructedly down upon the baseball field, my forehead was streaming with cold perspiration. The palms of my hands were damp and clammy. One thought and only one thought drummed through my mind. Three more men; three more men; three more men. Again and again, as I sat on the players' bench, I could hear this phrase as distinctly as if a chorus were shouting in my ear. Could I do it? Could I retire three more batters without allowing one of them to get a base hit?

Finally Wally, the catcher, came over and sat down beside me. "Well," he said, "what shall we throw at these next three dummies? Your arm should be pretty tired. I'm afraid you'll hurt it if you throw any more fast curves. Maybe we'd better use a straight, fast ball and mix in your floater for a change of pace. That should be enough to get 'em without taking any chances of hurting your arm."

"O. K. Wally," I replied. "Now this first man up is poison. He hits left-handed and crowds right up on top of the plate. Anything over the inside corner is practically lost. I'll throw the first ball right at his head. It'll be fast but not fast enough to prevent him from getting out of the way. This may scare him back away from the plate, and we'll get him on low outside pitches. But if he gets on base, be careful. He's very fast and loves to steal. Now the second batter isn't very tough. He's their second baseman, and he struck out the last two times he was up. I don't know what to throw the next man. You know

that great big catcher? He's hit the ball every time up, but someone has always been able to get under it. We'll keep the ball high and outside to him and pray that he doesn't connect solidly."

Talking with Wally had helped to loosen some of the tension in me, and, as it ended, our shortstop made the third out. It was time to go back to work. As our side was retired I picked up my glove, tightened my belt, and started for the mound. Never before had the distance between the bench and the pitcher's box seemed so great. Nervously I picked up the ball and looked toward the plate where Wally waited to take my warm-up pitches.

"You get five; then we'll play," shouted the umpire.

"You get two more after that," called the opponent's third-base coach; "then you'll be on your way to the shower."

"Come on, nothing-baller," razzed the first-base coach. "You've been plenty lucky so far. Before this inning's over, you'll think you're standing in the center of a merry-go-round."

Perspiration once more popped out all over my body. Hastily I wound up and delivered the first warm-up pitch. The ball slipped out of my wet fingers, sailed high over the catcher's head, and bounced off the backstop. Again a great outbreak of ribbing from behind first and third. This time I paid no attention to the coaches as I wiped my hands on the resin bag and finished warming up. The catcher took my fifth pitch and threw the ball to the second baseman, who returned it to me. The umpire

called, "Play ball," and the batter stepped into the box.

As I had expected, the batter crowded right up next to the plate and crouched until the upper half of his body was actually bent across the pan. The catcher squatted and gave the signal for a fast ball. Slowly I wound up and threw the ball right at the batter's head. Instinctively I realized that the pitch was too fast. The batter seemed paralyzed as he watched the ball speeding straight for his head. Suddenly he fell to the ground, but he had waited too long. The ball struck him a glancing blow on the top of his head, knocked his cap at least twenty feet away, and bounced completely over the low screen of the backstop. I rushed to the plate to see how badly he was injured. Luckily he was blessed with a thick skull, and, after he had rested for a moment, he refused to allow a pinch-runner and took his place on first base. Once more I returned to the pitching mound, greatly relieved by the fact that the batter was not seriously injured but very much aware that a no-hit ball game was still possible.

The opponent's second baseman, a good fielder but a very weak hitter, was the next batter. I looked toward the plate for the catcher's signal, but, instead, I detected some sort of signal being passed from the batter to the base runner. Acting on the spur of the moment, I called time and tied my left shoestring. This was a signal for the infielders to play for a bunt. The third baseman picked up a handful of loose dirt and tossed it aimlessly in the direction of third base, the shortstop and second baseman both shouted "Easy baby," and the big, first baseman let out a low roaring "Come on, gang!" Although seemingly meaningless, these responses actually meant that each of the

players had seen my signal and would play their positions accordingly.

The catcher had seen and heard all the signals, and he responded by calling for a fast ball shoulder high. This is the most difficult kind of pitch to bunt because it is easily popped into the air rather than on the ground. I took my position on the rubber, glanced toward the runner on first, and threw the ball. My third baseman came charging in with the pitch; the first baseman took three quick steps in and stopped; the second baseman covered second while the shortstop ran over to cover third in view of a possible play at that base. My hunch had been right, and, as things turned out, our defensive play was perfect. The runner on first had gone down with the pitch while the batter, instead of bunting a slow grounder, popped the ball up in the air. The third baseman caught the pop fly and quickly whipped the ball to the first baseman, who stepped on first base to complete the double play.

Gleefully the infielders threw the ball around the horn while the spectators applauded and threw their hats in the air. Two men were out, no one was on base, and still the opponents hadn't had a hit. The catcher returned the ball to me, and the next hitter stepped into the batter's box. He was a huge fellow, and, as far as anyone knew, he had no weakness at the plate. He always hit the first good ball, but he wouldn't go after a bad one. The first time up he had fouled out on a fast ball, but the next time he had hit the same kind of pitch hard and on a line right to the second baseman. The last time he had hit a long fly to the left fielder who caught the ball only after a long, hard run. What couldn't he hit? Surely he must have some weakness.

The catcher, as though he were read-

ing my mind, took a lot of time before passing out the signal for the next pitch. Slow ball! Sure, why hadn't we tried it before! I wound up and threw a floater. It was a perfect pitch. The ball turned very slowly, wobbled back and forth, and, just as it reached the plate, broke sharply downward. The batter seemed to hesitate momentarily in mid-stride. Then, with a tremendous swing, he sent the ball high and far down the left field foul line. No one could catch that ball. Uttering a silent prayer and swallowing a lump in my throat, I looked toward the umpire. He was watching the flight of the ball intently and finally, as it came to earth, signalled it a foul.

Once again I could breathe, but I still didn't know what kind of pitch to throw the hitter in order to get him out. As a last resort I called for the catcher to come out to the mound.

"Damn my arm, Wally," I began, "I want this man out, and I want him out in a hurry. I'm going to throw him a fast curve. If he misses it, and I still have an arm left, I'm going to throw him another one faster than the first."

"O. K.," replied Wally. He started to say something else but seemed to be

afraid to trust his voice any farther. Instead he gave me a friendly pat on the back and returned to his position.

There was no need for signals now. Wally and I both knew what I was going to throw. The batter waved his big yellow bat once as I started to wind up. Silence fell over the entire field. Everyone was too interested and excited to utter a sound. I took one last deep breath, flung my left foot high in the air, and threw the ball with every ounce of strength that I possessed. The batter swung viciously and connected solidly with the ball. Like a shot it sped back toward me, shoulder high and slightly off to the right. Desperately I flung my gloved hand across my body and dove through the air. The ball went on, passing just over my outflung glove. With a feeling of dismay I twisted to watch the flight of the ball. Suddenly my heart seemed to quit beating. The spectators were going completely insane. Our shortstop had run far to his left, dived through the air, and caught the ball just off the grass tops to retire the last hitter. The ball game was over, and, because of a sensational fielding play by the shortstop, I was credited with a no-hit ball game.

Night Driving

The hum of the wheels on the flat macadam highway, the faint glimmer of the dash lights, and the heavy breathing of my sleeping companions made me drowsy. I was having my turn at the wheel, as we sped across the Great American Desert on our way to my sister's wedding in California. The stars were a million pinpoints of light. The pale moon, crescent-shaped and ghostly, hovered over the distant foothills, its pale light making the desert, dull enough in the daytime, a land of mystery. Through the side windows I could see distant buttes of sandstone like sheets hanging up to dry on a summer's day. The sage brush, gleaming, silvery in the moonlight, appeared to be growing as I watched. The thin haze surrounding the moon and the foothills, made me feel as though the whole scene were something make-believe . . .

Finally I stopped to stretch my cramped body, smoke a cigarette, and get a bit of fresh air. I stepped out of the car into a clear, chill blast of air. I breathed deeply, and marveled at the beauty of that vast, moon-bathed desert. After my short rest, I climbed back into the car, to continue that monotonous repetition of sound, the hum of the tires on the highway, and the breathing of my sleeping passengers.

—ROBERT E. WRIGHT

Cyclone Around Me

WILLIAM RANDOLPH

Rhetoric I, Theme 2, 1940-1941

ALL DAY we had been expecting one of those fierce March storms that predict an early spring, but as the last bell rang, it appeared as if we were to be disappointed. The sun was now shining very brightly, and only a slight breeze moved the few clouds above us. As I went from my last class to the auditorium, I found myself wondering how such a beautiful ending could come from such a poor start. My beautiful ending was a false one, however, for before the sun finally set, the hospital was full and ten people had been killed.

The day had been cloudy, and the sun had seldom appeared; the air was warm but damp. About three it turned dark, and a half hour later artificial lights were needed. At this time a wind, bordering on a gale, swept in from the southwest; the sky turned green. We at school were filled with apprehension. Rain fell for about three minutes and then abruptly stopped. The sky cleared very rapidly, and in fifteen minutes the sun was shining in an almost cloudless sky.

In the auditorium the music department was holding try-outs for the spring operetta. I remained after my try-out, waiting for a friend. As I was lolling about in the corridor, Mr. Schmidt, our principal, rushed in the door. Very hurriedly he told us to raise the windows and hold open the doors, for a storm was about to strike. Just as I got one of the doors open a terrific wind blew it back against me. I called for help, and it took four of us to hold it. We didn't realize that we were pushing against a seventy-mile-an-hour gale. Actually we were not feeling the full force of the

cyclone, for we were one hundred and fifty yards out of its direct path, and the sun shining over our heads made us think that it was merely a windstorm. But we saw a car turned on two wheels by the wind, and rubbish was dashing through the air at alarming speeds.

When the storm passed, I went out to see what damage had been done. As I headed toward Union School, half a block away, I noticed that the huge smoke stack of the canning factory was missing. A closer view disclosed that the whole factory had been demolished. At Union School the trees were gone, the roof was gone, and half the second story had been swept away. I went inside. I found desks bent, windows shattered, and the stairs in splinters. I saw nobody, and went to the basement just as the janitor, only slightly scratched, was climbing out of his room. He said that everyone had left a half hour before. As he could help himself, I went out into the street. What I saw there stunned me.

At first the streets were empty, but presently people appeared from everywhere. Here a whole house was smashed into a cellar. As I watched, a man staggered out of the ruin. He was naked and bloody. He reeled, and two men came and helped him. I turned toward the filling station. It was gone completely—not a tank, not a brick was left. I looked across the street—cars piled on end against a building—cars three deep, and not the thickness of one. By this time people were all around. A screaming mother searched for her child. Everywhere people moaned and sobbed. They were too dazed to cry out. A boy ran up

to me and said, "You're needed. We must give first aid."

I went with him to help. Bandage this one. Support here. Help here. Run there. Lift a baby, battered and blue, from a water-filled cellar. Guard a wire. Clear a path. "Here's help." "Help coming." "Help coming." Here was a leg, but no man. Bewildered and stunned, I sought to do all I could. Ambulances and doctors were here now. I was tired, scared, and sick—very sick. I started

home, dazedly and slowly first, but soon faster and faster; stumbling over wires, tripping over branches, I broke into a run. I ran and ran.

Exhausted finally, I returned to a walk. As I looked around me, I saw that the houses of this neighborhood were in one piece, only torn shingles and broken branches giving evidence of the storm. A block farther, and only bits of straw and leaves had been disturbed. Another block, and I was home.

The Quack Novel

LOIS MELL

Rhetoric II, Theme 2, 1940-1941

THE quack novel is a thing which looks like a book, and which is compounded, advertised, and marketed in precisely the same fashion as Castoria, Wine of Calorta, "Mrs. Hottner's free-to-you-my-sister Harmless Headache Remedy," and other patent medicines, harmful and harmless.

As the patent medicine is made of perfectly well-known drugs, so the quack novel contains perfectly familiar elements; and like the medicine, it comes wrapped in superlative testimonials from those who say they have swallowed it to their advantage. Instead of, "After twenty years of bed-ridden agony, one bottle of your Foxforo cured every ache and completely restored my manhood," we have, "The secret of his powers is the same God-given secret that inspired Shakespeare and upheld Milton." This, from the *Chicago Tribune*, accompanies a quack novel by Mr. Harold Jones, of whom the *New York Journal* remarks, "It is this almost clairvoyant power of reading the human soul that has made

Mr. Jones' books among the most remarkable works of the present age." Similar to that aroma of piety and charity which accompanies the quack medicines, an equally perceptible odor of sanctity is wafted to us with Mr. Jones; and just as imitators will make their boxes and bottles to resemble those of an already successful trade article, so are Mr. Jones' volumes given that red cloth and gold lettering which we have come to associate with the bindings of Mr. Winston Churchill's very popular and agreeable novels. Lastly—like the quack medicines—the quack novel is generally harmful; not always because it is poisonous (though this occurs), but because it pretends to be literature and is taken for literature by the millions who swallow it year after year as their chief mental nourishment, and whose brains it sops and dilutes. In short, both these shams—the book and the medicine—win and "bamboozle" their public through methods almost identical.

Racial Inequality in Hawaii

JANE POWELL WYATT

Rhetoric I, Theme 5, 1939-1940

HAWAII is called the "melting pot of the Pacific," and its residents say proudly that it has complete racial equality. That statement might seem to be true to the tourist, who sees that the various races living there attend the same schools, theatres, hotels, and social functions. I know, however, that racial equality does not exist in Hawaii.

At the University of Hawaii the Japanese students hold all of the school offices, but only because they are the majority. The Caucasians try hard enough to get positions and, after failing, make fun of the so-called "Oriental dynasty" and let it go at that. The Caucasian students rarely go to the University dances; when they do, they would not think of exchanging dances with their fellow students of Oriental or Polynesian ancestry. They would be social outcasts if they tried it. If a Japanese boy and a Caucasian boy graduate at the same time and apply for the same job, the Caucasian boy will usually get the job, even if the Japanese boy has been at the head of the class, and he at the foot. It is very difficult for Orientals to find really good jobs. Many Oriental women graduates of the University of Hawaii become maids, or work in the pineapple cannery. The men, too, work in the cannery, and in the sugarcane or pineapple fields. Many become small shopkeepers, tailors, or policemen. Sometimes Orientals with degrees from mainland colleges hold civil service jobs of minimum salary, although at adjoining desks can be found Caucasian high school graduates who are making just as much money.

This state of inequality is due partly to the Orientals themselves. They are American citizens and they have American ideas, but they don't have the American standard of living. They are accustomed to, and are contented with, their lower standard of living, and many are satisfied with their low wages.

But the main obstacle confronting racial equality is, I think, the presence of so overwhelming a number of Naval and Army officers and personnel in the Islands. People who reside there for less than three years cannot get used to thinking of the different races as American citizens instead of "foreigners." Most mainland Caucasians have been accustomed to thinking of the Oriental as a stealthy individual wearing a kimono and carrying a dagger in his sleeve. When they were youngsters they no doubt stopped in front of a Chinese laundry and chanted, "Chink, Chink, Chinamen eat dead rats."

People must be made to realize that when the Hawaiian Islands became a Territory in June, 1900, all citizens of Hawaii automatically became citizens of the United States, and all children born there, regardless of nationality, likewise are citizens. Until this fact is realized, there can be no racial equality. The mailman who is emptying an American mailbox confesses to a far Eastern ancestry. The man on this corner who wears a policeman's uniform is a Polynesian, on the next a Japanese, and on the next the son of an immigrant from Portugal or perhaps Russia. A fat, middle-aged Oriental woman and a Japanese school girl with bobbed waved hair

drive cars through the heavy traffic. Four out of five of the faces seen are not the sort of faces one would call "American" at home. It seems that the United States has been invaded by a throng of aliens;

yet these people are all American citizens. More important than the fact that they are citizens is that they want to be good Americans; therefore they deserve to be accepted as such.

Hobbies

R. KEITH HUDSON

Rhetoric II, Theme 8, Summer Session, 1940

A HOBBY is an insidious thing. It *grows* on you—like a wart. Well, not exactly like a wart, either, for a wart is but a minor irritation, and a hobby is an affliction that, well into its advanced stages, is virtually incurable. All classes and types of people are susceptible to hobbies; one person seems to succumb about as easily as another. Having contracted one, you may not at once be aware that you have it. Even your family and your best friends may be totally oblivious of it for a while.

The most discouraging fact about hobbies is that they are no respecters of persons. They prey on the strong as well as the weak, on the sane as well as the slightly addled. It's all the same in the end, though; however normal in the beginning, a person suffering from a hobby will be addled before he is finished.

Before you are stricken by your hobby you are rolling through life just like any other ordinary citizen. Little warning have you that at any moment you may jump the track. You are doing the things you are accustomed to—commuting to and from your work every day, going to school, or studiously loafing—the same as ever. You may not have the slightest warning that you are menaced. But you are. You are not safe anywhere. Unlike other diseases, hobbies are not contracted

in any specific way; therefore, they may not be guarded against by vaccines, vitamins, antitoxins, or other nostrums. No definite procedure seems to furnish any protection, and no special mode of life seems to guarantee immunity. Only people who have a matter-of-fact interest in life are in any way immune to hobbies; imaginative people are push-overs. Hobbies are so contagious that, once exposed, a person is lost. The onset of a hobby is imperceptible at first; you are invariably caught off-guard. As the disease progresses, you begin to experience faint stirrings and vague premonitions. But soon forgetting the warning, you put your fears behind you, and go about your regular activities for all the world as if you were in your right mind. Your outward appearance remains unchanged. Even your actions do not start to become really noticeable until the disease is well advanced and your case is hopeless. It is the mental effect that is the most devastating. You become vague-eyed and dreamy, you slowly lose your powers of concentration upon your ordinary affairs, and you fall into reveries and seem a little deaf to your associates.

Whatever form your affliction takes, the results are almost always the same. Your bank account, if you have one, slowly disappears, and you become possessed of a multitude of singularly use-

less objects such as electric trains, model airplanes, hound dogs, turtles, or gold-fish. You become a fanatic about postage stamps, old coins, beer bottles, picture postcards, fossils, arrow heads, or wooden Indians. You become morose and uncommunicative toward your more normal fellows, yet a wonder of loquacity when in the company of others who suffer the same disease. You become a patron of clubs or societies, leagues or associations, brotherhoods or fellowships—all composed of wild-eyed individuals like yourself, each endeavoring to out-talk or out-brag the others. Rational citizens begin to look at you askance; you are labeled a “crank,” or a “nut,” or,

at the least, “queer.” Your domestic life becomes practically non-existent, home is but a place to eat and sleep, and you are scarcely to be seen by the world except at meal times. Your wife, if you have one, becomes a golf widow, a fish widow, or a camera widow; if you are dominated by one of the more *strenuous* obsessions of the ardent hobbyist, such as motorcycles, hobo automobiles, out-board hydroplanes, ice-boats, racing skiffs, long-distance swimming, cross-country running, or firearms, she may become simply a widow.

If you get it bad enough, in any form, it's the booby hatch and a padded cell for you, sure.

Nutty Lindy¹

MILTON BREMER

Rhetoric I, Theme 10, 1939-1940

SOME people rush into situations without looking or thinking. Such a person is Charles Augustus Lindbergh. However good his flying may be, however lucky he may be in other efforts, his skill and luck don't hold in his journalistic attempts. Only his name gets Colonel Lindbergh's writing into national publications.

In the November, 1939, issue of *Reader's Digest*, Mr. Lindbergh propounds a very pretty philosophy, telling us of the danger that the Asiatic races constitute to our Western civilization and how the airplane is a divine gift to the western nations and so on and so on.

I cannot imagine where Lindbergh ever got the idea that he knew anything about race unless it might possibly be

from fooling around with a chicken heart with Dr. Alexis Carrel. Even his manner of writing suggests that he doesn't know what he is writing about. There is a vagueness about his words as though he had an idea in his head but didn't know why it was there or how to tell about it. His article makes it quite evident that he didn't do very much research in his subject before writing.

What aroused my curiosity at once was his “pressing sea of Yellow, Black, and Brown.” What does Lindy mean? Is Father Divine running for President? Is Mahatma Gandhi promising a sacred white ox in the parlor of every Indian? What threat are the “teeming millions of Asia” making against the West? It seems to me that the majority of the Asiatics are busy fighting among themselves. The rest are kept busy staying

¹This article was suggested by a short editorial in *The New Republic* of Nov. 15, 1939.

out of the way of the belligerents. They want no part in our hemisphere now, and there isn't much indication that they ever will unless William Randolph Hearst has the real lowdown on the Japanese spy business.

The western nations seem to be doing quite an efficient job of raising a hullabaloo in one of the most complicated messes I've ever heard of. Liars and thieves, murder nations and martyr nations, are inextricably mixed together. France is trading iron for coal with Germany. What race is what in Europe? Who's fighting whom? Is there a war going on or not?

It isn't the Yellow, or the Black, or the Brown race that is pressing on the Western nations, but it's the Western nations pressing on themselves. If ever the Asiatic or African races dominate

the world, it will be because the white man will have defeated himself with Colonel Lindbergh's idea of the divine gift—the airplane. Of course he'll use cannon and tanks and other implements of war too. I don't know whether these are divine gifts or not. Colonel Lindbergh didn't say. He didn't say a lot of things that could be said, and he said a lot more that should never have been put in print, unless in a "Letters to the Editor" column in the *Tribune*, signed by Elmer Zilch, of Gutch Corners. It strikes me as just the sort of narrow-minded "crank" letter an uninformed and misinformed person would send in.

Lindy should let his wife take care of the literary efforts of the family. It's evident that the Colonel doesn't know what it's all about.

Conformers and Non-Conformers

F. C. GEHANT

Rhetoric I, Theme 12, 1939-1940

"AND this," said the landlady, with all the pride and condescending benevolence of a small-town mayor dedicating the new waterworks, "is the dorm." In my eagerness to inspect its wonders and enchantments, I almost kicked over a basket of rotten apples. I was—putting it mildly—a wee bit surprised to behold nothing but bare rafters, a line of battle-scarred cots, and in one corner a pile of junk which had obviously taken many tedious years to accumulate. All I could think was, "This is just like our attic at home; only Mom doesn't keep our rotten apples in it." Furthermore, at home I had never been called upon to sleep in the attic, and I reckoned that at twenty-two I was a little too far advanced to begin.

When I finally built up enough courage to tell her I didn't want to sleep in her beautiful dorm, she looked down her nose at me in wonder and said, "Why, all the boys sleep up here!" The nasty inference of the words shocked me. It was as if she had called me a downright infidel and considered me a sort of abnormal fellow who went around destroying sacred traditions, and who would bear considerable watching. Here it was again. The dread problem which I had been meeting for the past ten years—whether to conform to other people's ideas on what I should do and be miserable but honored, or to do what I wanted to do and be happy but ignominious.

To know that I am not alone in my quandary is some comfort. The population of the entire world is divided into two groups—those who strive to conform to convention, and those who do as they like. I do not mean to detract in any way from the glory of the conformers. They are the people who build our national institutions; they are the guardians of our traditions. On the other hand, the non-conformer, like me, is a minor menace to society.

He is likely to be an exceedingly poor business man, because he will, without the slightest qualm, drop everything and go fishing when the notion strikes him. If you ask him if he has seen "Gone with the Wind," he will undoubtedly say "No," and be quite surprised when you stare at him in open-mouthed amazement. The true non-conformer fails to conform not merely to be contrary; in fact, he is seldom aware that he is breaking any precedents when he suggests serving beer at the church bazaar. True, he knows that beer has never been served

at the bazaar, but he can see no reason why it shouldn't be, inasmuch as everyone would like to drink it, and it would bring in a nice profit.

The non-conformer is a simple soul; he does not need to strive for happiness. His happiness comes automatically from simply not doing that which would make him unhappy. The conformer is caught in the whirlpool of conventionalism. On a Sunday evening, when he would much rather be out shooting craps with the non-conformers, he invites the Smiths over to play bridge, merely because the preceding Sunday evening he played bridge at their house. He hates golf, but joins the country club because all his friends belong and membership will improve his social standing. In the event of war you are certain to find him in the trenches dodging bullets, or on the street corner giving long-winded speeches to build up the fighting spirit of the non-conformer, who is probably headed for the river with a fishing pole and a can of worms.

Relief Client

She pushed the button on her desk, and, when her secretary appeared, asked that the first relief client, Grandpa Rhodes, be admitted. In walked a rather tall, white-haired man of about seventy, wearing a battered old ten-gallon hat, and carrying an old scarred-up cane. He propped his cane against the desk, drew his chair up close, and began telling Evelyn about his wife, who, it seemed, was sick. He was very thankful for a new wrapper that he had received, and told Evelyn that she should visit his wife to receive her thanks, and to see his climbing roses which were blooming on his back fence. Talking about flowers seemed to get him warmed up, and before long he was telling Evelyn how he ran away from his home in Kentucky to become a cowboy on a ranch in the Texas panhandle, how he met his wife, married her, and took up gardening to make her happy with the flowers. In his eyes there was a far-away look as he and Evelyn sat there in silence for a few long seconds reminiscing. "When things get to growin' and the wind gets to rustlin' through the trees and the moon shines down softlike on the green grass just come pushing up, then, Lordy, I get restless to shove my foot in a stirrup once more," he continued. Once more there was that short silence before he finally said goodbye and hobbled off.—RICHARD SHOULDERS

America versus Sweden

EVERETT L. HAAG

Rhetoric II, Theme 12, Summer Session, 1940

Sweden, the Middle Way, by Marquis Childs.
Rich Land, Poor Land, by Stuart Chase.

WE IN America, who have thousands of magazines and millions of books to read, often do our reading aimlessly and carelessly. We often read magazines because of the attractive covers or because our friends read them, and we often read a book because the sound of the title is euphonious, or because it is recommended by the Book-of-the-Month Club. Sometimes we find a good magazine or a good book by those methods, but too many times we fail. In my reading of *Rich Land, Poor Land* and *Sweden, the Middle Way*, I fully realized the value of guided reading, for in no two books that I have ever read have the facts in one book illuminated the facts in another book in so forceful and striking a manner. The wasteful destruction of natural resources in America by free and rugged individualists, although we are living in a world that needs those resources, seems all the more unjustified when America is compared to Sweden—a land that has learned from experience the necessity of collective protection and through reverence the desire for that protection. I read the book about Sweden first. I felt as I read it that many of the measures being taken in that country could, perhaps, profitably be adopted in America and I realized, too, that some of those measures are being attempted by our present administration. Then I read *Rich Land, Poor Land*, a book about America—the richest and newest country in the world—a book about the destruction of natural resources. I read

about the wasteful cost of this destruction, which reached billions of dollars. I read how, while we waste and destroy, we are permitting people to live in slums without proper food, medical care, or adequate housing facilities. And I discovered the falsity of the American standard of living that overlooks vast areas in the South, in the Appalachian Highlands, in the Ozarks, and the Dust Bowl. Why?

The people of the United States have made the worship of bigness an official and national religion—everything must be big, with special emphasis on the size of profits. In reading *Sweden, the Middle Way*, one understands how Sweden has made her domestic economy serve the greatest good of the greatest number by abolishing or curbing profits, and how this has resulted in a national life of stability, of order, and of sanity. Sweden has discarded out-worn individualism, and has devised a system of state control and a new collective order of cooperatives. Production is for use and not for profit, and the cooperative union is carried on not only for the practical advantage of lower prices to consumers but also as a fundamental social duty.

The struggle of the cooperatives for power was slow and at times seemed doomed to failure, for it was met with resistance from various groups and associations of manufacturers and retailers at home and abroad. The first consumers' production unit was a unit for margarine, and once a foothold was gained, its activities slowly spread to consumers' and producers' units in flour,

rubber, savings banks, insurance, light bulbs, liquor, tobacco, cash registers, gasoline, and coffee. The state gradually gained a controlling interest in the utilities, in the means of transportation, in the mines, and in the forests. The factories, mills, and apartment houses built by the cooperatives are ultra-modern and are arranged for the convenience of the users and for a high degree of efficiency. As the cooperatives produced goods, their respective products were placed on the market at a much lower price than the goods produced privately; in order to stay in business, these private companies had to reduce their prices. Light bulbs dropped in price from thirty-seven cents to twenty cents; kilowatt-hour costs dropped from a ten- and fifteen-cent rate for household uses to a one- and two-cent rate. There were corresponding savings to consumers in all the cooperatives' products and services.

The government of Sweden owns many of the railroads, the airlines, and the major lines of communication—the telephone and the telegraph. The rates set by the government's companies serve as yard sticks for the private companies, and the government operates its companies on policies as sound and practical as those of the private companies. Sweden has many conservation laws, and although the country is one of the world's largest exporters of lumber, her national forest laws protect the future supply of lumber, and that supply is actually increasing. In one mining town where the government has a controlling interest in the mines, the children go to a free school where they receive free dental service and medical care. Hot lunches are served without charge in all Sweden's schools. The schools provide a rudimentary scholastic background and special training to capable boys and girls. There are also many government-sup-

ported adult schools. Everyone over the age of sixteen contributes to an old-age-pension system according to his income; and for those who can not contribute, the local community pays. At sixty-seven everyone gets a pension according to the amount contributed by him, regardless of his need. The housing program is financed by loans from the state, varying from fifty-five to ninety-five per cent of the value of the property; and the state also subsidizes the rents of tenants having three or more children.

Albin Johansson, president and managing director of the cooperative movement, is paid only \$5,000 a year, and he is said to be the most astute merchant in the country. He, like all the officers, takes pride not in making profits but in running the business efficiently. He lives modestly in a five-room house although he is recognized as a leader of the country. He helped to formulate the method by which Sweden met the depression; and, although the country was aided by fortuitous external circumstances, its recovery was phenomenal.

Sweden, a country of patient, perseverant, and cautious people, a country that puts a high value on democracy and opposes the principles of the totalitarian states, a country that has not hesitated to curtail or abolish profit or the economic freedom of the private business man, has profitably taken a course midway between the absolute socialism of Russia and the development of capitalism in America.

America is pictured in *Rich Land, Poor Land*, as a land of unchecked and unbridled initiative; as a land that gives to the owners the power to destroy and the power to waste with no thought of their fellow citizens or of posterity. The individual has used and destroyed the forests, the mineral resources, and the wild game with the thought of only

private profit and with no thought of the rightful heritage of every person born upon the continent. Each bit of legislation passed from time to time has been met with the criticisms that it is interfering with the individual's rights—the individual's rights to destroy the forests, the individual's rights to take one-fifth of the oil from the earth and to cause four-fifths to be lost forever, the individual's rights to take one-third of the coal from a mine and to cause the remainder to be irretrievable. The men coming to America after Columbus looked upon its resources as infinite. In the swift pursuit of private profits, men tormented, hurt, and beat the continent of North America until its patience became exhausted and it turned upon its tormentors. It set about to drive them from the continent, and it used as its weapons those that its tormentors had given it—the flood, the forest fire, the dust bowl, the lack of grazing ground, the erosion of soil, the dearth of wild game, and the emptiness of mines. If the people living in North America succeed in completely destroying the continent, it in turn will completely destroy them. Only by protecting it can they protect themselves. "All during this time of destruction, red-faced gentlemen in silk hats have declared this progress, and bankers have looked benevolently over their wing collars and declared everything sound."

After almost three-hundred years of more or less complete blindness, men are beginning to protect the continent, but to date the means are entirely inadequate. The present administration has initiated various plans to check the inroads of destruction, and further at-

tempts are being made through education. Our natural resources have been exploited by individual action, but nothing in the history of this exploitation allows us to conclude that our resources will be restored by individual action; for it is a costly and difficult process to rehabilitate our forests and plains. Proper restoration can only take place through group action, initiated and sponsored by our federal government.

No one would want to disparage his country's achievements, but one must admit that they are not enough. A great many more conservation laws will have to be enacted before the destruction of natural resources and the rehabilitation of natural resources will be in balance. Many countries have changed their economic structures, and capitalism in America today is greatly changed from the capitalism of a hundred years ago. Perhaps Sweden has found the correct "middle way."

Does capitalism mean license for a few private individuals, or does it mean freedom for all? We may have to decide, for we are living in a rapidly changing economic, political, and social world. Time and war do not respect the *status quo*. The conservative *London Times*, in commenting on the new order, warned against defining democratic values in nineteenth-century terms: "If we speak of democracy we do not mean democracy which maintains the right to vote but forgets the right to work and life; if we speak of freedom, we do not mean rugged individualism which excludes social organization and economic planning; and if we speak of equality we do not mean political equality nullified by social and economic privilege."

The Interpretation of the Negro in Modern Negro Poetry

BESSIE KING

Rhetoric II, Theme 11, Summer Session, 1940

THE "NEW NEGRO" is a term which was coined shortly after the World War. It was then that there emerged a new Negro character, stimulated by the social and economic changes which were in turn stimulated by the war. During the war period, thousands of Negroes migrated to northern industrial centers to replenish a depleted labor supply or to take positions formerly closed to them. The sudden influx of so many Negro families gave rise to housing and other sociological problems. Hence the interest of the white population was awakened to the needs, problems, and characteristics of the race. Because of this delving into the race problem, there developed a new view of the Negro character. He was recognized as having something more to offer than vaudeville clowning, shouting of hymns, or being porter to the nation. As a consequence of this sincere interest manifest in some groups, the Negro became intensely interested in self-revelation, and his poets began to write more prolifically and more revealingly than ever before. These poets, representative of the "new Negro," were anxious to reveal themselves as being "race conscious and race-proud, independent and defiant, conscious of their powers and not ashamed of their gifts."¹

Such pride of race is something new for the Negroes, and they are conscious of the reasons for this pride. The war helped them discover themselves. Negroes at home showed themselves capable of handling efficiently jobs and

positions which had been exclusively "white" positions; abroad, their regiments and soldiers exhibited excellent ability and spirit. The war over, they looked back over the years and saw that they had produced scientists, educators, writers, and musicians of whom they could be proud.

The Negro's pride in his race as it has developed in America, has led to a new interest in his African beginnings. He realizes that Africa has given him a heritage of music and art—phases of a distinctive civilization. He desires to cultivate the African in his personality. Langston Hughes expresses the connection of the Negro with Africa in the poem, "The Negro Speaks of Rivers:"²

I've known rivers.

I've known rivers ancient as the world and
older than the flow of human blood in
human veins.

My soul has grown deep like the rivers.

I bathed in the Euphrates when dawns were
young.

I built my hut near the Congo and it lulled
me to sleep.

I looked upon the Nile and raised the pyra-
mids above it.

I heard the singing of the Mississippi when
Abe Lincoln went down to New Or-
leans, and

I've seen its muddy bosom turn all golden
in the sunset.

I've known rivers,

Ancient, dusky rivers.

My soul has grown deep like the rivers.

The older Negro was conscious of his humble station and accepted it as his due.

¹Redding, J. Saunders, *To Make a Poet Black*, 93-125.

²Johnson, James Weldon, *The Book of American Negro Poetry*, 241.

Sometimes he protested, but very feebly. He was conscious always of being a Negro, hence an inferior being. The race-consciousness of the modern Negro is quite different from that. True, it is a consciousness which springs from a sense of living in hostile surroundings. The Negro is not able to forget that he is a problem, that the color of his face closes doors which would otherwise be open. But, more important than that, he is conscious of belonging to a race which has made its contribution to civilization. And his race-consciousness is increased by the realization that the so-called enlightened nations of the world, ruled by other races, have spent years in tearing one another to pieces and have not yet arrived at an equitable peace.³

Negro poets are so imbued with this awareness of their race that, although they try to restrain it, it usually colors their work.

The fact that Negroes are aware of their problem and protest against its existence is some evidence of hope for a brighter future. The optimistic, hopeful expression is recurrent in Negro poetry. In the older poetry it is a hope vested in a God who would lead the Negro race into a better world. Now, there is hope for the future, but a hope which depends upon continued struggle; a hope which says "bide your time." Countee Cullen's "From the Dark Tower"⁴ discloses this type of optimism:

We shall not always plant while others reap
The golden increment of bursting fruit,
Not always countenance, abject and mute,
That lesser men should hold their brothers
cheap;

Not everlastingly while others sleep
Shall we beguile their limbs with mellow
flute,
Not always bend to some more subtle brute;
We were not made eternally to weep.

The night whose sable breast relieves the
stark
White stars is no less lovely being dark,

And there are buds that cannot bloom at
all
In light, but crumple, piteous, and fall;
So in the dark we hide the heart that
bleeds,
And wait, and tend our agonizing seeds.

The love of the physical aspects of nature is not lost to the Negro in his constant battering against racial barriers. It is a love which has been associated with the traditional Negro, only his was a more utilitarian love. Nature was the provider, the giver of life. To the modern Negro, nature is a source of beauty and pleasure. His is a sensuous delight in warm colors, in the richness of the soil, in the lushness of tropical greenery, in the coolness of leaping rivers. Some of these delights are expressed in the following poem by Claude McKay.⁵

AFTER THE WINTER

Some day, when trees have shed their
leaves

And against the morning's white
The shivering birds beneath the eaves
Have sheltered for the night,
We'll turn our faces southward love,
Toward the summer isle
Where bamboos spire the shafted grove
And wide-mouthed orchids smile.

And we will seek the quiet gill
Where towers the cotton tree,
And leaps the laughing crystal rill,
And works the droning bee.
And we will build a cottage there
Beside an open glade,
With black-ribbed bluebells blowing near
And ferns that never fade.

The Negro is, of course, highly emotional. The traditional Negro expressed his over-flowing feelings in song and religious orgy. The old-fashioned Negro minister was adept at playing on the emotions of his congregation. The modern Negro has the same power of deep feeling, though he tries to conceal it under a cool exterior; and it often blazes

³Brawley, Benjamin, *A Short History of the American Negro*, 178-179.

⁴Johnson, *op. cit.*, 228.

⁵*Ibid.*, 271.

forth with doubled energy, as in Claude McKay's poem, "To My White Friends:"⁶

Think you I am not fiend and savage too?
Think you I could not arm me with a gun
And shoot down ten of you for everyone
Of my black brothers murdered, burnt by
you?
Be not deceived, for every deed you do
I could match—outmatch: am I not Africa's son,
Black of that black land where black deeds
are done?

This passage expresses, incidentally, the bitterness so characteristic of the contemporary Negro. The traditional Negro was resigned to his fate. He believed that his fate had been ordained by God, and that it was not his place to complain. Bitterness was not a part of his character. But here again we may see the influence of the World War. When the regiments arrived from France in 1918, there was, of course, a need for readjustment. Negroes who had held good positions were dismissed in favor of returning white soldiers. Many Negro soldiers, returning to some of our Southern states, were severely beaten and stripped of their uniforms. These were the means taken by the Southern mob to re-instill in the Negro the knowledge of what his "place" was in the South. Discontent and injustice in Northern states precipitated several race riots. No wonder that defiance and bitterness were instilled into the Negro! They are his shield against race antagonism. In "If We Must Die" Claude McKay again expresses this defiant spirit, the poem being occasioned by the numerous riots of the year 1919:

IF WE MUST DIE⁷

If we must die—let it not be like hogs
Hunted and penned in an inglorious spot,
While round us bark the mad and hungry
dogs,
Making their mock at our accursed lot.
If we must die—Oh, let us nobly die,
So that our precious blood may not be shed

In vain; then even the monsters we defy
Shall be constrained to honor us though
dead!
Oh kinsmen! We must meet the common
foe;
Though far outnumbered, let us show us
brave
And for their thousand blows deal one
death-blow!
What though before us lies the open grave?
Like men we'll face the cowardly pack,
Pressed to the wall, dying, but fighting back.

Despite this bitter, defiant attitude the Negro has a reputation of being gay, laughing, carefree. He is all of this, and something else, too. After the Civil War, laughter and gaiety facilitated his entry into a white world. He gained a tolerance through being the buffoon, the lazy, irresponsible clown. Now he resents being thought a fool. He laughs, he is gay; but his laughter is often ironic and deliberate, his gaiety is often empty of joy. It is the type of humor expressed in this poem by Countee Cullen:

Once riding in old Baltimore
Heart-filled, head-filled with glee
I saw a Baltimorean
Keep looking straight at me.

Now I was eight and very small
And he was no whit bigger
And so I smiled, but he poked out
His tongue, and called me "Nigger."

I saw the whole of Baltimore
From May until December
Of all the things that happened there
That's all that I remember.⁸

Langston Hughes captures this ironic humor in the short epitaph, "For a Lady I Know."⁹

She even thinks that up in heaven
Her class lies late and snores,
While poor black cherubs rise at seven
To do celestial chores.

The physical expression of love is not a moral question to the Negro. It is an expression of a natural instinct and is not to be denied. To him, physical

⁶*Ibid.*, 169.

⁷*Ibid.*, 168.

⁸Cullen, Countee, *Color*, 50.

⁹Redding, *op. cit.*, pp. 110-111.

expression, like the beauties of nature, is to be enjoyed, not condemned. He glories in the fine mechanism of his body. This poem by Countee Cullen illustrates the Negro's attitude toward love:

That brown girl's swagger gives a twitch
To beauty like a queen;
Lad, never dam your body's itch
When loveliness is seen.

For there is ample room for bliss
In pride in clean brown limbs
And lips know better how to kiss
Than how to raise white hymns.

And when your body's death gives birth
To soil for spring to crown
Men will not ask if that rare earth
Was white flesh once or brown.¹⁰

Perhaps the fact that the Negro's concept of religion is changing accounts partly for the attitude that sexual expression is not the sin that the traditional Negro thought it to be. Although the relationships between the Negro slaves were usually casual, conventions of a white society were pressed upon them; in the light of the Christian doctrines taught to them, these casual alliances appeared immoral. Religion, however, came to be more practical than spiritual. The Negro's religion was simply his hope for an after-life of peace and surcease from toil.

The contemporary Negro does not place his faith in the religion of his parents. He sees clearly what their religion was and relegates it to the past. James Weldon Johnson used the thought and color of the traditional Negro minister in his book, *God's Trombones*, which he wrote not because he believed in the philosophy expressed but because he re-

spected the tradition that left such beauty and strength of expression.

LISTEN, LORD

Oh Lord, we come this morning
Knee-bowed and body-bent
Before thy throne of grace.
Oh Lord—this morning
Bow our hearts beneath our knees,
And our knees in some lonesome valley.
We come this morning—
Like empty pitchers to a full fountain,
With no merits of our own.
O Lord—open up a window of heaven,
And lean out far over the battlements of glory,
And listen this morning.¹¹

Johnson has done with this material what should be done with the heritage of the Negro race. There would thus be a race proud of its heritage, made distinctive by the contributions of its past and fused with the nation of which it is necessarily a part.

¹⁰Cullen, *op. cit.*

¹¹Johnson, *op. cit.*, 125-126.

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Shower-room

You don't need a compass to find it. If you follow your nose, you can't miss it. That damned locker room smells worse than a convention of Russian ditch diggers. The "NO SMOKING" signs are wholly unnecessary, for the reek of steam and sweat and dirty clothes is so heavy that a match couldn't possibly burn.—TOM SHIFF

Rhet as Writ

(Material written in Rhetoric I and II)

Instead of balancing the budget Roosevelt has made it even more larger with his ideas of unemployment and etc. It is true that he has employed several people by his W. P. A. and his other work programs. By introducing these programs he has made our taxes larger and he has started us on our way to Americanism. Mr. Roosevelt has taken over the farmers as much as he thinks he can without having them revolt. He tells them how much acreage of each grain he is to plant These along with other reasons is why I dislike our present President.

Confidentially, what is the future of Old Dobbin? I guess he just he has no future. The old gray mare is being squeezed out of all his enterprises.

I am happier for having gotten away from "mamma's apron strings" and lived on my own instead.

How many times we have sat and chat about religion.

I was originally born in New York City. This was before the Appeal of the Eighteenth Amendment.

The quiet, unassuming young man who a few years ago was almost in poverty now lies in the nook of luxury atop the ladder of success.

Many people in Germany today are more proud of their dictator for his cruelty then we as Americans are of our president for his finery.

They thought he was only marring her for her money.

This oak had large roots growing up out of the ground and snarling around in every direction.

The next stand that we come to we'll eat.

The eight men contestants wore a light pair of trousers.

The pledge has had the sharp corners of his bad points pretty well rounded off.

We now noticed his flaxen hair which protruded from the edges of a sailor cap that I don't know where he could get it in that desolate land.

When I registered in September, 1939, I felt extremely proud of myself in that I had been able to wiggle in a nine o'clock MWF tennis and ice skating class.

\$2000 worth of teeth were imported into Philadelphia in one year from skulls found on the battlefield of Waterloo, fought on June 18, 1815, for dental purposes.

If Hitler wins the recent European War the two American contents would be in great danger. United States would be in a ticklish possession.

The author seemed to have the strangest and the most unfitting endings for his conclusions at the end of all his stories.

Honorable Mention

ALICE ALDEN—Drury Lane
BERT BERNSTEIN—Communism, a Way of Life
JAMES BROWN—Mono-Raciality, a Problem
JULIAN DAWSON—Campus Businessmen
BYRON ELSNER—Escape
PAT GALVIN—The Failure of Civilization
H. P. GUIMARAES—The Cattle Drive
LORNA HANSELMAN—Surrealistic Art
EALON ROBERTA HARRIS—Martha Berry
JUNE ANN HART—Manahatta
WILLIAM HIGGINBOTHAM—*The Robber Barons*
MARY LOUISE JACKSON—Personality
DELBERT JONES—Proration of Illinois Oil
LORENE KETTENBURG—The Tour Way
OTTO E. JOHNSON—The Grasshopper Strikes
KINGSLEY KEIBER—The Challenge of Waste
ROBERT LAFFERTY—The First Muskellunge
KEITH LANGE—Four Bright Silk Scarves
J. KENNETH LEININGER—A Wheat Thresher
G. W. MCGILL—Kid Calahan
CARROLL O. MEYER—First Date
LEONARD SANKSTONE—Why Live at Home?
MARIAN SHEPHERD—A Heeler
NICK SHUMAN—Copy!
JEANETTE SMITH—*We Too Are the People*
PAUL STARK—Spider
LOUIS H. STERN—Free Sample
A. C. TRAKOWSKI—Circus Blaze
JOHN M. WELLS—*The Last Puritan*
DEANE WHITE—My Attitude toward the Negro
DONNA WILCOX—Revenge
JACQUELINE WILLOUGHBY—Indian Lake

